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SUBJECT: ZIMBABWE: SOME AFRICAN LEADERS CALL FOR RESUMPTION
OF AID AT LONDON MEETING

REF: LONDON 694

¶1. (SBU) Botswana President Ian Khama called for a resumption of aid to Zimbabwe during the March 16 consultative meeting with Africa leaders in the run-up to the London Economic Summit, according to UK Government officials present at the meeting (reftel). Khama said he was initially "very skeptical" that a Government of National Unity (GNU) would work between MDC and ZANU-PF, but that after recently seeing Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai, Khama is convinced that it would be a mistake not to support Zimbabwe's GNU by resuming aid as quickly as possible. Kenyan Prime Minister Odinga and Tanzanian President Kikwete also agreed that aid to Zimbabwe should be resumed in order to support the GNU and ensure its success. Nigerian Finance Minister Mansur Muhtar, however, told HMG officials after the meeting that Khama, Odinga, and Kikwete's statements had not been previously agreed and did not represent a consensus position.

¶2. (SBU) According to HMG officials, UK Prime Minister Gordon Brown responded by saying that Zimbabwe is receiving significant humanitarian support, but additional support will come with GNU progress. Brown said the UK will respond to progress in stages, and financial and political support is also needed from African countries.

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